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ABSTRACT

This booklet surveys the possibilities in instituting a 4-day school week, an approach which has gained favor in some small school districts. The history of the 4-day week and its characteristics are first described. Drawing on case studies of districts that have begun the 4-day schedule, the authors enumerate the steps in proposing and implementing a program and then point out the ancillary concerns (legal, organizational, instructional) that 4-day school weeks raise. The impact of such schedules on families, the community, and school staff are also analyzed, noting such evidence as community support and staff attitudes, and performance. Reports of student performance--attitudes, attendance, achievement--are considered. The topic of financial considerations includes the program's advantages and savings, as well as some fiscal cautions. Finally, a nationwide survey compiles information on some states' reasons for not using 4-day weeks, on the results of studies completed by other states, and on the reasons for implementing 4-day programs by states that have done so. (JW)

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SOUTHERN OREGON

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

presents:

• THE FOUR DAY WEEK •

AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR

by

JEAN POPE and RUSS GILLIAN

A project funded jointly by

THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

and

JACKSON EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

May 1984

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Introduction

The following chapters describe the four day instructional week, a non-traditional approach which has gained favor in several small districts across the nation.

Readers will find many quotations from district and state documents which were obtained as part of our research. Superintendents, boards, and teachers have important thoughts to convey about their schools, and in many instances we chose to use their own words instead of our interpretation.

An especially important part of this report is the section entitled "Survey Results." A brief questionnaire was sent to all states and U. S. possessions. Responses were gratifying, and the return was 100%. Comments of respondents are enlightening; some favor the four day week, a number oppose it. Several individuals provided fairly detailed descriptions of other ways they are approaching scheduling.

Another section which the authors hope will prove to be useful to readers is the annotated bibliography. Our research yielded a number of documents from four day districts and from state departments. Their content is described briefly to assist anyone who may wish to order copies from the districts.

Educators are facing difficult times. Resources are diminishing while costs keep rising. The entire nation seems to be demanding educational "excellence" but in many communities voters are defeating school budgets. Corporations (IT&T, BELL & HOWELL, ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITTANICA) are even considering getting into the education business by starting elementary and secondary schools. Not surprising, then, that boards and administrators look for ways to cut expenses without endangering programs.

The authors have attempted to maintain an objective

viewpoint in describing what evaluation efforts show, or fail to show, about the four day week. We invite readers to share with us any information from implementing districts which we may not have collected in our research. Additional facts gained will be included in any future edition of this publication.

The authors:

Jean Pope is Director of Curriculum and Special Projects at Jackson Education Service District, Medford, Oregon. Her responsibilities at Jackson ESD include working with small schools in the county. Oregon has four school districts which have implemented a four day instructional week program. Two of those districts are in Jackson County.

Russ Gillian, who served as research assistant for this four day project, is a student at Southern Oregon State College in Ashland, Oregon. His research included interviews with superintendents and others in four day districts, as well as reviews of state and district publications.

The Four Day Week

History of the Four Day Week

Reasons for Implementation

Characteristics of the Calendar

Characteristics of Four Day Districts

The four day instructional week is not new, nor is it a plan which invites large numbers of implementers. However, several dozen small districts across the nation are claiming success with this particular schedule. Their testimonials, in the form of progress and evaluation reports, illustrate a conviction that quality instructional programs can be maintained, students can continue to achieve academically, and money can be saved by changing to a four day week. Authors of these reports generally offer the qualification, however, that because of many variables, the chances for success in other districts cannot easily be predicted.

Current four day districts have borrowed the concept from earlier educational pioneers. Districts elect the four day calendar now, as they did in the early 1970s, to serve one or more purposes: to reduce overcrowding, conserve energy, improve instruction, or reduce costs.

According to information from several sources, at least 62 districts in eleven states are on a four day schedule during 1983-1984. Sources of data are state and district documents, a survey to all states and U. S. possessions, and information from James Roeth, Ohio, who is researching the topic. In addition to the eleven states which now have four day districts, three other states have had districts on the alternative calendar in the past ten years but not during the 1983-1984 school year. All but one of the fourteen states list "financial" as one of the main reasons for

implementing the plan. The one remaining state lists "instructional improvement." Six additional states have completed studies but have not implemented the alternative calendar. Statements are included in a later section of this report for each of the states--their reasons AGAINST experimenting with a four day calendar, reasons for DISCONTINUING the plan, and reasons SUPPORTING the concept.

In districts which have received approval to change to four days, the length of the student school year is typically 145 to 150 days, each day about 6 1/2 to 7 1/2 hours long, resulting in total instructional hours of less than 1,000 to 1,080. States which mandate a minimum number of instructional hours per day or per year insist that the number will at least be maintained when a district changes to the new schedule. In states without a mandated minimum, districts are required to maintain or exceed the number of hours they scheduled prior to implementation.

For many districts starting and ending dates will be similar to traditional five day schedules. Other districts, adopting the plan because of weather conditions, begin the year earlier, schedule time out in winter, and end in late spring or early summer. Weekly schedules are quite similar from district to district--four instructional days, one off day. The students' "off day" is usually Friday or Monday. The fifth day may provide opportunities for special activities for students or staff, or it may simply be a non-school day. Teachers are usually required to report to work on some of the off days.

Approval to begin the plan involves several levels of authority, beginning with the local district and proceeding to the state department of education or state legislature. State laws have at times been changed in order to permit the revised calendar. An interesting history of legislative decisions leading to approval of the concept is traced in New Mexico's evaluation report.

Recent efforts in several other states have received less than enthusiastic reception from governing bodies. Sheridan County, a small district in Wyoming, returned to a five day school week after the state's supreme court declared its less than one year old experiment to be illegal. "The state supreme court ruled that a day 'commences in the A. M. and ends in the P. M. within a 24-hour period and could not be considered as a sum total of hours counted over several days." (EDUCATION WEEK, April 27, 1983). The district had received an earlier tentative approval to implement a four day schedule from the state board of education, with agreement from the state attorney general. The state is not

submitting legislation to allow approval of the alternative calendar.

In other states, too, the four day week has encountered various kinds of problems or delays. In Idaho a four day week bill was recently vetoed by the governor. His veto was overridden by the House, but sustained by the Senate. The governor contended that such "experiments" should be controlled by the state board of education. Introduced in the Nebraska legislature, a four day week bill did not receive favorable ratings in a statewide citizens poll conducted by THE OMAHA WORLD HERALD (EDUCATION WEEK, April 6, 1983). Nebraska superintendents, responding to a survey by a study committee, indicated low interest in a four day week (19%) as compared to the traditional 180 day schedule (69%). In Montana a bill proposed in 1983 to allow a four day week was defeated.

Additional interest in school calendar length is evidenced in plans by various state educational agencies. Partly as a result of several major reports including A NATION AT RISK by the President's Commission on Excellence in Education, a number of state superintendents are advocating longer, not shorter, school years. Community members who have been strongly influenced by arguments promoting a 200 or 220 day year may have difficulty understanding a board's wish to adopt a calendar of 145 to 155 instructional days.

Even though shorter school years appear to be an unpopular concept in some states, other states permit districts to implement the plan after providing justification for their move to a non-traditional school year. Both New Mexico and Colorado are examples of states whose four day districts are apparently considered successful by state leaders. Because districts in the two states have several years of experience with the four day week, they are perceived as the experts in the nation, serving as positive models for other districts studying the alternative calendar.

> On the national scene, the Colorado program has received wide-spread publicity and interest. Our office has fulfilled a deluge of requests from over 40 states including England and Australia for information. These inquiries have come from teachers, board members, parents, college professors, state and national legislative leaders, other state departments and professional associations. (C. L. Stiverson)

Colorado's experience after three years of piloting and two years of collecting evaluation data indicates the following

benefits:

> The realities of implementing the four-day schedule have surprised virtually everyone involved. The only aspect that was not a surprise was the realization that the schedule can result in some budgetary savings. Beyond this, administrators found, to their amazement, that the new schedule affects attendance, the conduct of co-curricular activities, the way teachers teach, the kind of textbooks needed, and the attitude of nearly everyone. (Robert W. Richburg and Lonnie Wood)
>
> Teacher-student absenteeism lowered by 30%
>
> Teacher-student morale is greatly improved
>
> Student achievement does not suffer and in fact, shows remarkable gains in some districts
>
> Transportation maintenance costs are down by 18%
>
> Bus gasoline savings range from 15% to 23%
>
> Addidtional energy savings, in fact, are realized
>
> New and better teaching methods are evolved
>
> Other creative and future adaptations of the concept are just beginning to be stimulated (Stiverson)

The success claimed by New Mexico, Colorado, and other implementing states is attributed to several factors, most important being size and nature of the district, and support of the community, parents, staff, and students. New Mexico's 1983 summary report includes statements related to size and demographics of successful districts:

> All of the districts in New Mexico currently on a four-day school week are rural in nature. This is also true for the 12 school districts included in the Colorado study . . . The results reported for these districts may not necessarily be generalizable to all school districts. In fact, there is reason to believe that for one area in particular, parent and community support, the reaction in an urban setting to the prospect of a four-day week could be quite different than in the rural communities.

A similar statement is made in an earlier Colorado report dealing with its own four day districts:

> While significant effort and resources were invested in the evaluation of the four-day schedule, several important questions remain incompletely answered, and are in need of further study. The twelve districts involved in the study all have small enrollments and represent similar types of communities. Whether the four-day week will prove to be a positive scheduling alterative in larger districts, or in metropolitan communities, cannot be determined from the results of this study.

Legislative action in New Mexico (1982) resulted in a ruling that only districts with 500 ADM or less would be allowed to change to a four day week. All districts in the state currently on the plan meet that criterion. In Colorado, too, districts are small, ranging from fewer than 100 to slightly over 1,000. Oregon's four districts, newcomers to the calendar, range from approximately 200 to over 1,000. The conversion process, while not necessarily a simple matter in such small districts, would certainly be more complicated and cumbersome, less easily justified in larger cities where significant numbers of students are involved. Even more important than district size, however, are the district's specific objectives in adopting the alternative calendar.

Administrators, staffs, and boards should be able to state clearly what the precise objectives are in changing the calendar, assuring the community that essential educational programs and services will not be detrimentally affected. Such assurances must be based on facts, not feelings, and they must be the result of careful research and competent planning. Furthermore, district leaders should be able to attest that the plan can be adequately and efficiently put into place, and that it can be competently monitored. If these assurances cannot be made in good faith, the district is not ready to accept a major innovation such as the four day week.

A Process Study

The Concept

The Board's Involvement

The Research Process

The Approval Process

If a district is to experience even moderate success with any major innovation, staff, students, board members, and the community must support the change, believing it to be beneficial to educational programs. Implementation of the four day week is no exception.

Before deciding to adopt the alternative calendar, a district board usually authorizes a feasibility study. The typical study committee is composed of persons who represent the groups to be most affected by the change. Usually included are classified and certificated staff members, board members, administrators, persons from the community, and sometimes students. Association officers may be invited to appoint members to represent its interests, thereby strengthening district-association relationships and perhaps circumventing possible problems related to contractual changes. Committees are charged with the task of researching several areas of potential impact.

Pennsylvania districts interested in a four day week "or some other altered schedule which would result in less than 180 days of instruction," are required to conduct a feasibility study. The State Department of Education outlines these objectives:

> To determine if the proposed program has general acceptability in the school community
>
> To make projections concerning the overall impact

of the program

To anticipate problems which might be encountered when the program is put into place

To generate data in support of the district's request for an exception to the 180-day requirement.

Several of the reports listed in the bibliography are results of group studies, including those from Rogue River and Eagle Point School Districts in Oregon and the State Board of Education in Nebraska. The study committee may point out potential benefits, paving the way to adoption, or, in the case of Eagle Point, Oregon, recommend against the change. Research generally includes information from Colorado and New Mexico, the two states with long range experience with the alternative calendar, as well as data from other implementing districts. Not uncommon in committee reports are quoted "testimonials" from staff and students supporting the four day concept.

If the committee believes the calendar is appropriate for the district, recommendations will be presented to the board. Committee members may then be charged with the added responsibility of surveying attitudes of the community if that process has not been part of the feasibility study. Next, a series of public hearings are generally scheduled. Patagonia Union High School, Arizona, approached the task in this way:

> The four day week was discussed at the special meeting of the governing board held on February 2, 1983, and again at the regular meeting held on May 11, 1983. These meetings and agendas were legally posted. In addition to these two meetings, a public meeting was held on May 23, 1983, to receive input and give information to the general public. The meeting was posted and advertised by way of posters throughout the community. The meeting was very well attended.

AN ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK (Colorado) lists a number of specific suggestions for working with the community, pointing out that important differences exist between INFORMING and INVOLVING people. The publication proposes that sharing information to community organizations and groups as part of regularly scheduled meetings appears more effective, and that small groups are best if two-way communication is an objective. Large group meetings, the authors point out, are

not the best way to provide information and request input "because a dominant position held by an individual or a small group, whether positive or negative, may create an ineffective atmosphere and discourage two-way communication."

The board, after determining that the schedule will be accepted in the community, is required to petition the state department for a waiver of the required number of instructional days. State approval for the alternative calendar requires an implementation and evaluation plan. To satisfy requirements, the plan must be comprehensive and demonstrate the ability of the district to meet the demands associated with a trial program. For example, Pennsylvania expects an explanation of specific conditions in the district which justify the request. The list of items a district must submit includes a general rationale statement, facts related to economic conditions, demographic and geographic factors, unique characteristics of the student body, unique characteristics of the present educational program, and identification of models, literature and research bearing on the proposed program.

Oregon Department of Education requires the information from districts to include: a statement of proposed accomplishments to be used as basis for evaluation, outline of staff development plan for implementing and maintaining the alternative schedule, outline of plans for keeping parents and community informed of implementation and progress of alternative schedule, outline of student orientation plan, evaluation procedures mentioned in board resolution be listed and timeline established, a district board resulution or statement agreeing to be a pilot program for the alternative schedule and share results with other districts.

The following components appear to be fairly common expectations from states across the nation:

SCHEDULING:

The district must provide evidence that an adequate number of instructional hours and days have been scheduled. Laws in some states establish a specific number of instructional hours.

"Educational standards relative to the minimum number of class hours per day by grade level must be met including the equivalent of 180 teaching days, achieved through extended instructional time

each day." (New Mexico) Requirements from that state are 450 minimum hours per year for kindergarten, 810 for grades 1 - 3, 900 for grades 4 - 6, and 990 for grades 7 - 12. States not having a mandated number of instructional hours simply require that the district's instructional hours under a five day plan not be reduced. New Mexico goes further in defining what the instructional day should be. "The four days of scheduled instructional time must include only academic tasks and duties. Activities and athletic programs are to be scheduled for the 'nonschool' day of the week or after the close of the stated instructional hours during the 'school' days of the week."

Pennsylvania asks: "What is the proposed schedule? Projected calendar for year, daily schedule--hours of instruction, Schedule of activities for the fifth day, and instructional or class schedule."

The plan is comparable to preceding years in terms of . . . academic contact time. (Oregon)

BUDGET:

Most states which permit the alternative calendar require the district to provide evidence of anticipated dollar savings, listing specific items in the budget where savings are expected to occur.

"The school district must be in sound instructional and fiscal condition before experimentation with the alternative calendar can be attempted." (New Mexico)

Oregon districts, on the other hand, according to a recent memorandum from the state department, must demonstrate significant fiscal problems before a waiver of the 175 day requirement will be considered.

Pennsylvania Department of Education looks for projections of savings in several areas: physical plant operation, transportation system, and miscellaneous supplies and services.

"The board shall file a request for approval with the department. . .(which) shall include a listing of the savings and goals to be attained under the

innovative school year. . ." (Iowa)

EVALUATION EFFORTS:

The district must submit an evaluation plan which addresses certain areas outlined by the state. Evaluation areas are likely to include student and staff attendance and performance, budget expenses and realized savings, and community reactions and support.

"An evaluation design will be developed which will include students, staff, and community reaction to the alternative schedule." (New Mexico)

"At a minimum the evaluative analysis must provide data on the following: a study of the impact on student achievement, transportation and facility utilization changes, cost comparisons, staff adjustments and reactions, parent/home adjustments and reactions, and student reactions." (Nebraska)

"Final approval . . . is contingent upon (several items) including. . . A statement of proposed accomplishments to be used as basis for evaluation. . . Evaluation procedures mentioned in board resolution be listed and timeline established." (Oregon)

"What past measures of student achievement are available to establish a baseline of performance? What types of achievement assessment will be used . . . ? What other achievement-related measure will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program?" (Pennsylvania)

A request to continue an innovative school year pilot project after its initial year also shall include an evaluation of the savings and impacts on the educational program in the district." (Iowa)

Formative and summative evaluation is planned. (Oregon)

The most significant kind of evaluation to be conducted is an extremely critical district self-evaluation after entering into the four day plan. Is it accomplishing the district's specific objectives? Is it "popular" with staff and students for the RIGHT reasons? Is it realizing a

success which might be directly related to the novelty of the approach? In Colorado's 1981 evaluation report, this word of caution appears:

> A final area requiring further research involves a question of the Hawthorne Effect. An innovation is frequently perceived to be a very positive thing initially, but the support for it may later dwindle as the novelty and enthusiasm surrounding the innovation or change wears off. The four-day schedule needs to be studied over a longer period of time to determine if the enthusiasm expressed by parents, teachers, and students will be maintained at the high level observed in this study.

Research indicates that an innovation takes about five years before it "implants" itself securely. Many of the four day districts are only beginners. Evaluators should probably therefore expect early data to reflect an excitement and enthusiasm that may diminish as the program ages. Colorado and New Mexico are the states to watch in the future. These states will be further refining the evaluation process and will be able to trace progress longitudinally.

During a district's planning and implementation process, each of the above areas is important. However, to be successful, a district should remember that the first steps are crucial ones. Depending on the extent of involvement of students, staff, and the community in the plan's development and approval process, actual conversion to a four day week will require varying degrees of effort. A smooth transition appears to be easiest when all the groups most affected by the calendar change have been actively involved in establishing objectives and determining how to evaluate their progress.

Scheduling & Curriculum Concerns

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

THE CALENDAR

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

TIME AND LEARNING

CURRICULUM CONCERNS

Intended to insure provision of a quality education, regulations in some states govern minimum instructional hours and days. If regulations are ignored or violated, state funds can be withheld from a district. School district boards wishing to implement an alternative calendar must therefore observe the correct procedure in seeking permission from governing bodies.

In New Mexico the law was changed over a period of years in order to accommodate alternative calendar requests. Other state departments of education have simply named the four day districts "pilot programs" or "experiments" and have thus gained legislative approval, when necessary, to adjust the year's length within those districts. Trial status as a four day district usually carries with it the responsibility of careful documentation in order to progress past an "experimental" state. In other states waivers can be granted by the state department of education.

The four day week calendar, as outlined in Chapter 1, most often consists of 145 to 150 days, each from 6 1/2 to 7 1/2 hours, for a total of less than 1,000 to 1,080 total hours in the year. Uses of the fifth day are varied. Some districts schedule extracurricular activities and staff

development sessions. Other districts, implementing the four day week for energy conservation reasons, avoid using the facilities during the off day. The yearly calendars of most four day districts remain similar in terms of starting and ending dates. However, if a district has implemented the plan to conserve energy during extremely cold months, the year will probably begin in late summer, the schools will close during several winter weeks, and the last day of school will be set for early summer.

Districts have a number of different reasons for their choices of Monday or Friday as the off day. Colorado offers suggestions:

> The decision whether school is dismissed on Monday or Friday involves some important tradeoffs. Making Friday the off day allows the scheduling of all co-curricular activities on that day and avoids the loss of academic time to these activities during the rest of this week. This may be a particularly good choice if the other schools in your league or conference have also implemented the four-day schedule with Friday as the off day.
>
> Making Monday the off day offers other kinds of advantages. The majority of national holidays are celebrated on Monday so that day will be frequently lost anyway. More importantly, from a financial standpoint the Tuesday through Friday schedule will allow you to save the greatest amount of energy costs. Your gym will have to be heated for sporting events on Friday evenings regardless of which day you take off. If Monday is the off day, building thermostats can be turned down over three full days from late Friday until early Tuesday morning. If this is your decision and you want to maximize your energy savings you will need to inform your staff that if they work at school or if practices are scheduled on Monday, the building will be only minimally heated.

Several other questions may be addressed prior to that particular decision, based on an implementing district's particular relationship with other districts. For example, what day is likely to be most important to out-of-district specialists who serve the four day schools? How will academic competitions be scheduled with five day districts? Will intra-district courier service schedules be affected more if Monday or Friday is the off day?

The use of the fifth day for student activities varies

significantly from district to district, ranging from highly structured sessions to very few scheduled activties. Since most four day districts are rural, most students transported, savings are reduced if too many activities are planned during the fifth day. Colorado's publication, AN ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE, offers specific suggestions for productive and educational uses of the off day.

A change to the new calendar necessitates an adjustment in the length of the instructional day. As explained in Chapter 1, hours subtracted from the fifth day are added to the remaining four in order to meet minimum hour requirements. Generally, this addition means more than an extra hour per day. The resulting length of the school day can prove to be an area of concern, especially if students are transported fairly long distances, or it can bring about some beneficial changes.

The lengthened days can provide additional learning opportunities, according to reports of implementing districts. Since the day is approximately an hour longer, time can be used for new classes, or to extend existing courses. Teachers in areas such as vocational education and science lab classes have indicated an appreciation of the extra time. When a significant amount of time is needed in classes to set up equipment or materials each day, actual instructional time can be increased under the plan. The increase in learning hours is due to the fact that set up time is necessary only four days instead of five.

Instructional techniques may need to change, as pointed out in a Colorado document. Lecturers, for example, may need to shorten their presentations and allow students to be involved in varied activities. Elementary curriculum should be analyzed to assure a balance of highly academic subjects and more relaxing opportunities.

One distinct advantage of the new calendar is that inservice or planning sessions can be scheduled for teachers on the day school is not in session. In an appeal to the North Dakota Legislative Assembly in 1983, advocates of the four day week mapped out a plan to improve the quality of instruction by using money for inservice which could be cut from transportation expenses. The argument included the statement that "the four-day schedule can provide both time and the money to implement an unprecedented program of small school improvement." The strengths of collaboration were cited:

> Involving two or more schools also provides the numbers necessary to make cost effective use of

outside consultants. This combined with the larger block of time (Thursday afternoon and Friday) to work with teachers and administrators justifies the cost and time necessary to bring in outside consultants.

The primary purpose of the Sheridan County, Wyoming, district in moving to a four day calendar was also "to improve the quality of education." A total of sixteen education or inservice days were scheduled for teachers during the implementation year, and a survey of staff members at the close of the project indicated that about two-thirds felt the change helped them "to use their time more effectively, promoted a sense of pride and interest in the job and enabled them to try new ways of doing their work." The remaining third, on the other hand, "said the approach had a negative effect on the time available to do all their work. . . Some members of both groups suggested that the approach may well promote stress and fatigue."

Interesting parallel to the four day movement can be observed in comments about two North Carolina districts. The districts were willing to adopt a seven-hour, 200-day school year for three years, beginning with the 1983-84 school term. The TIME FOR LEARNING PROJECT (Halifax and Polk Counties) Not only did they have implementation problems like some four day districts, but they also held some strikingly similar objectives:

> Problems remain to be solved, but the atmosphere is now more conducive to working on solutions to these problems. A feeling of optimism about the potential for the program now exists. Some of the early apparent improvements include: both school systems looking at quality time throughout the school day, a dedication to upgrading staff, a broadening of existing programs, an increased use of state department services. . .

Implementation of the four day week--or any other alternative calendar, for that matter--will not in itself cause the quality of instruction to change, although teachers sometimes claim that it does. In fact, the statement has been made to authors of this report that "There simply is no time to waste now. We're under pressure to get the job done in four days!" The "pressure" teachers feel may be related to their new understanding of instructional time use. A concentrated effort is usually made by administrators in four day districts to assure that classroom time is used wisely, and school staffs become aware of interruptions and take action to prevent them. If

improvement of instruction results, it should probably not be attributed to the new calendar, but rather to renewed interest in the processes of effective teaching and its relationship to improved learning.

District boards and administrators should carefully analyze the positive reports of districts concerning improved use of time. Most, if not all, of the strategies can be employed, and most, if not all, of the favorable results can be achieved by schools without the major undertaking involved in adoption of a four day instructional week.

Families & The Community

SUPPORT

USE OF THE FIFTH DAY

PROBLEMS

According to reports of districts, family and community members usually show strong support of the four day week.

> The majority of students, teachers, staff and parents advocated the four-day school week plan as had been enacted by the district. (Wyoming)

> Like the teachers surveyed, parents were very supportive of the four-day school week. 91% of all parents surveyed were in favor of continuing with the new schedule, though 17% would modify the schedule as it was implemented in their district in some way. (Colorado)

Much of the support evidenced can probably be traced to the involvement of the community prior to implementation of the new calendar. As a part of most districts' plans, people have been invited to react to the idea before its adoption. They have been encouraged to share their concerns in special meetings and have seen the district address those concerns in the planning process. The fairly intense involvement in such an important school district issue might well lead to a high level of support for the concept after implementation.

A letter to patrons of the Patagonia Union High School District, Arizona, illustrates how community members were kept appraised of the four day week situation:

Patagonia Union High has also been in the news a lot here the past few weeks. We will be the first school district in Arizona to go into a four day week. This was necessary because of the cuts in funding for education. The district lost over eighteen thousand dollars from the regular budget due to declining enrollment. It lost approximately ten thousand due to the equalization formula. An additional twenty-two thousand plus was lost when the STATE did not fund the vocational programs. I must say that the move to a four day week began as an economical move but we can now see where we may get educational benefits as well. The entire staff and most of the students are bound and determined to make it work. Other steps which had to be taken to balance the budget were: 1) not to fill a teaching vacancy; 2) cut one maintenance position; 3) cut back further on supplies and materials. All efforts were made to keep from cutting the student programs.

Some of the problems anticipated by parents and the community can be predicted: fatigue of small children during the longer day, additional babysitting expenses, safety of children when waiting for buses in the dark winter hours, loss of retention over the long weekend for handicapped students and very young children, secondary students in town with nothing productive to do. Parents also wonder whether their children will be "oversaturated" by learning so much in so short a time.

The four day week can impact the family and community in various ways. A study committee from Rogue River School District in Oregon visited four day districts in their own state prior to implementing the program:

> An informal opinion survey was taken by committee members on the sidewalks and in businesses of each community. Committee members learned that while considerable reluctance for the new idea was, in the beginning, somewhat widespread, the parents and business community alike are now almost unanimously supportive. Merchants indicate no problems with vandalism or loitering. Parents state that students are busy with school activities, family activities or jobs. Parents of younger children often agreed that having the family together an extra day was seen to be a positive factor.

It should be noted that the sites visited by the Rogue River School District committee were Prospect and Days Creek School Districts, both in rural Oregon communities, both slightly over 200 ADM. Rogue River is four times that large. Now in its first year (1983-1984) as a four day district, patrons appear to be generally supportive. A few individuals have expressed dissatisfaction, however, in the form of a petition against the four day week.

Other reports include summaries of varied reactions to the four day week by families and other community members:

> The community impact was split. . . Most parents saw Fridays a positive opportunities for family activities. Families where both parents were working and the children were of elementary age tended to view the four-day week in a negative light. (Wyoming)
>
> The results of a survey to parents in several small districts after a fairly short experimental period with the four day week showed some dissatisfaction: 65% did not favor the plan as compared to 35% who supported it. Parents expressed dissatisfaction with "quality of education, longer school day, tired students, and concern for younger students." (Kansas)
>
> (A letter to Peter Sweet, Principal of G. B. White School, Deerfield, NH) As President of F.O.C.U.S, an organization that represents not only parerts of school children but other segments of the community (i.e. pre-school, college-age, retired and non-parent), I would like to endorse the George B. White School and the four-day week. We have found the support in the community for the four-day week to be overwhelming, and this organization will continue to give our full endorsement to this program. Sincerely, Carol Lobdell.

A number of very specfic concerns that will probably be raised by parents are outlined in a Colorado publication, AN ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK. The list is drawn from the experiences Colorado districts have had with the four day week: daily school schedule, weekly school schedule, co-curricular program schedule, homework expectation, absence policy, lunch and snack schedule, transportation schedule. Districts report that, on the whole, these concerns simply do not develop

into major problems, but if a problem does develop, it can usually be dealt with easily.

Questionnaire results from parents tend to show common uses of the fifth day. Shopping, doctor or dentist appointments, work at home, weekend trips--all of these activities are frequently mentioned. Some respondents report that the use of the fifth day by the family as a whole results in a closer bond between children and parents.

Because most imlementing districts have been small and rural, there has apparently been no significant impact on business areas. If larger urban districts adopt the four day schedule, another kind of data may emerge to test acceptance.

School Staff

Attitudes

Attendance

Performance

Acceptance of the four day week by school staff is vital to its success. Involvement from the beginning is important if certificated and classified personnel are to feel an ownership of the plan.

In Patagonia, Arizona, staff support for implementation can be observed in a letter from the president of the Association of Classroom Teachers, May, 1983:

> This is to inform you, the Governing Board, and the public that we, members of the high school faculty, have given unanimous approval to the institution of a four day school week.
>
> We have discussed the pros and cons in some detail, and have come to the conclusion that the four day week offers the best solution to the financial situation now facing us. We have studied figures and data from other schools where the four day week has been instituted, and they are quite impressive and persuasive.
>
> We as a faculty pledge our support and our every effort to assure the success of this new venture, should the Governing Board indeed decide to institute it.

In New York, however, results were different. An extensive study of nine alternative calendars was conducted by the State Education Department partly as a response to a 1977

fuel shortage. The traditional calendar, according to surveys of school staff, students, and the public, "is the most acceptable." The four day week, as described in the study, would have cut a day each week during "cold" periods. The plan, which included lengthening the remaining days to make up time, "received favorable responses from business leaders and students. . . but union groups gave this arrangement a low rating."

A few districts report that staff members have been quite concerned over possible negative contract modifications. This issue is a vitally important one to address early in the planning process. Steve Straughan, a regional officer for the Oregon Education Association, points out several areas of possible conflict that district boards should consider:

INVOLVEMENT:

ALL employees should be convinced that the change is right for the district. Support will probably be withheld unless staff is actively involved in all stages of planning and implementation.

PREPARATION TIME:

Teachers will be required to present lessons in an extended time frame. Planning may therefore be more critical as instructional adaptations are made in order to hold students' attention and interest. Because students in four day schools arrive earlier, leave later, teachers' planning periods may be shortened. Consequently, other planning time needs to be provided. Off days are non-duty days unless specifically designated by the district as work days, so staff should not be expected to use that time for preparation.

Teacher aides, too, will be affected similarly.

BREAK TIME:

If the day is lengthened significantly, staff members may wish to have a duty-free break in addition to the lunch period.

EXTRA DUTY:

Extra duty assignments sometimes begin BEFORE the school day officially ends. With the longer student day this may not be possible, so

additional hours--extra pay--may be involved.

NEGOTIATIONS:

> Working conditions will be significantly altered within a four day week. Consequently, if a contract already exists at the time of planning or implementation, or if negotiations are in progress, an employee association could stop the process. In one Oregon district the alternative calendar was adopted before contract changes had been addressed. While differences were reconciled, tensions mounted in the district, perhaps unnecessarily.

Some state governing bodies clearly state that districts must pay close attention to contracts:

> Participation in a pilot project shall not modify provisions of a master contract negotiated between a school district and a certificated bargaining unit. . . unless mutually agreed upon. (Iowa)

After the new calendar has been adopted, if all has gone well in the planning and conversion process, improved morale is often cited in district reports.

> In Iowa, where four day weeks were begun as an energy savings measure during the coldest months, changes in morale are explained: Advantages cited were: energy savings and improved staff and student morale during the four-day weeks. A corresponding drop in morale was noted during the extended days of the school year which also included snow-makeup days. (Ida Grove Community School) . . . Prime motivation was to reduce energy costs but an additional benefit was improved morale during four-day weeks. (Urbana)

> Ninety-five percent of the teachers, both elementary and secondary, who have taught under the four-day schedule for a year preferred it to the traditional schedule. They cited both personal and professional reasons for their preferences. The availability of the off day for personal use was an important positive factor. . . Many secondary teachers felt the lengthened class periods under the four-day schedule increased instructional efficiency. (Colorado)

Chances are good that if staff members have been actively

involved, and if conditions of their employment have been carefully considered in the plan, school staffs will support the four day week. Evaluation reports tend to document such support.

Improved staff attendance is usually one of the objectives in a move to a four day calendar. Colorado's small districts, comparing results over a three year period, found that an average savings of $675 in substitute pay per district was realized. Eight districts averaged 98.8 days of substitute use during traditional years, 74.25 days in the four day program. (To compare the two different calendars, 98.8 divided by 5 = 19.76, 74.25 divided by 4 = 18.56, a positive difference of 1.2). A few reports indicate that "staff and student attendance improved" without giving specific figures. As illustrated above, data can be confusing. In order to compare absenses in the two different time frames, computation is necessary.

Improved performance is also a frequently mentioned objective of the four day week. Wyoming's Sheridan County District developed an inservice program which made strong use of the off day. The evaluation document reports the outcome:

> The findings suggest that the four-day week had a positive effect upon the quality and quantity of student learning time. Classroom disruptions were minimized by eliminating extracurricular activities during the academic day. The efficiency of instructional time was enhanced, although fatigue was identified as a limitation. . . . Results suggest that the quality of instruction was improved by the four-day week and teacher inservice. Any instructional improvements made by the District did not result in improved student achievement. Either the approach had no effect or there was not ample time to realize academic gains within a single year. . . . The approach did not appear to have a negative effect upon the job performance of school staff. While enthusiasm was generated by the new schedule, fatigue was noted as a limitation.

As indicated in the chapter dealing with schedules and curriculum, teachers in four day districts seem to believe that the four day week has changed the way they deal with students and course content. They express the feeling that time is used more effectively and students "learn as much or more." Such beliefs are difficult to document.

Student Performance

ATTITUDES

ATTENDANCE

ACHIEVEMENT

Student attitudes, attendance, and achievement appear regularly as important topics in the evaluation reports of districts which have adopted the four day week. School boards and administrators naturally must be able to prove to themselves and their constituencies that a new calendar does not detrimentally affect the education of students.

The ways students react to and perform in learning situations are of course dependent on many factors. A listing of possible factors should include, but certainly not be limited to, the specific learning environment, including materials provided for lessons; competence of instructors; content of lessons; amount and quality of learning time; the skills (or lack of skills) which students bring to the experience; and the attitudes toward learning they have gained from peers, parents, and other persons in their lives. A change to the four day week will obviously not impact all of these areas. Claims that a switch to the new calendar has significantly affected student performance in any or all of the areas, either positively or negatively, should certainly be examined carefully.

Attitudes of students, as assessed in surveys, are almost universally positive toward the four day week, and almost all students want it to continue. Examples of favorable attitudes toward the change can be found in reports of several states including Kansas, New Mexico, Colorado, and Oregon. The skeptic might tend to question whether students' attitudes are tied directly to an improved educational experience or to other reasons, some perhaps

totally unrelated to academic achievement. Results of Colorado surveys, for example, indicate that the four most frequent uses of time for the 2,000 secondary students who responded were "working without pay (57.7%), working for pay (36.4%), games and sports (30.8%), and goofing around (30.7%)". Studying (25%) was seventh in the list of ten topics, reading was ninth (14.7%). In a Kansas survey the same list was used and students ranked the first three most frequent uses of time "working without pay, goofing around, and watching t.v." Regardless of the reasons, documentation does exist to demonstrate that the move is indeed popular with students.

Does the four day week, being popular with students, promote improved attendance? Some districts claim so; others report that the difference is insignificant.

> When the absenteeism rates of the four-day and five-day schedule are compared to determine the total difference in learning time which results from those absences, the result may not be educationally significant. Students on the four-day schedule gained one and one-half hours of instructional time per year because of differences in absenteeism attributable to the change in schedules. (Colorado)
>
> Student attendance was not affected by the four-day week. (Wyoming)
>
> Reduced student. . . absenteeism. (Kansas)
>
> Upon examining the. . . attendance data, significant increase in attendance is demonstrated. (Oregon)

From these and other reports, improved student attendance seems not to be a highly predictable result of a change to a four day instructional week, even though it is frequently listed as one objective of the move when districts are considering implementation. New Mexico has, however, noticed a very interesting phenomenon related to high school students. Four day districts have lower dropout rates than the state's average. As districts evaluate attendance, certain questions might be asked as a way of pinpointing whether attendance has been affected by the calendar change or by other causes unrelated to the new instructional time frame:

> What administrative or instructional changes have occurred during the year, other than the calendar

change, which might affect attendance?

What communicable diseases have occurred during specific years that may have influenced attendance, making comparisons difficult?

What extraordinary conditions such as extremes in weather have occurred which may have affected attendance?

Fatigue is factor which could possibly cause absences, especially for younger children whose school days become longer under the new calendar. Fatigue can also be related to reduced enthusiasm for learning. However, most districts find that after a few weeks children adjust fairly easily to the longer day. Various strategies are at times employed to promote an early acceptance of the schedule--rest breaks, snacks, and changes of classrooms and teachers can be provided.

Still another area of student performance, "achievement," seems always to be addressed in objectives of districts seeking approval to implement the four day week. Most districts assess student performance via norm referenced tests. One problem associated with this kind of evaluation is that small schools frequently do not have test records over a period of years with which to compare results of four day student scores. Consequently, difficulties arise in estimating what the EXPECTED academic growth should be within a traditional calendar, then determining whether that growth has been maintained or exceeded in the revised schedule.

In small schools the principal or superintendent is often solely responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting test data, since supportive staff trained in testing procedures is seldom available. Consequently, developing a year-to-year summary may be difficult for a person exposed to the daily pressures of running a school or district. Regardless of the reason, cumulative test data for small schools is sometimes lacking. The 1981 Colorado evaluation addresses this problem:

> Student achievement is another area which requires further study. While most of the districts tested their students systematically the year of the four-day schedule, many lacked adequate data for the years prior to the schedule change. Such baseline information is necessary to interpret changes that might have occurred during the experimental year. It is not enough to know that

at the end of the school year on the four-day schedule the students in a particular district finished in the 55th percentile. Districts which anticipate implementing the alternative schedule should test every grade level one year (preferably two years) before making the change.

The same report restates the problem in a slightly different way:

> Comparisons of student achievement under the five-day schedule with achievement under the four-day schedule are difficult to make. Although eight of the twelve school districts in the study provided some student achievement data for the past three years, a substantial amount was not appropriate to make these comparisons. Seven different achievement tests have been employed by these districts over that three year period, and because each of these tests is normed differently, comparisons between scores on different tests are not reliable. . . In this preliminary assessment, however, achievement is at least comparable. There is no reason to suspect that going to school four longer days, instead of five of a traditional length, hinders student achievement.

The project in Sheridan County, Wyoming, which did not complete one full year, found no major differences in student scores:

> Any instructional improvements made by the District did not result in improved student achievement. Either the approach had no effect or there was not ample time to realize academic gains within a single year. . . The approach did not appear to have a negative effect upon services to handicapped children.

After districts have lived with the four day week for several years, testing procedures become somewhat more sophisticated, and this phenomenon has occurred in both Colorado and New Mexico. As districts begin to develop a history of reporting and analyzing, interpretations have more meaning, as evidenced in New Mexico's 1983 report:

> Although the state sets forth general guidelines for data collection. . . each district develops its own specific evaluation design. Given that these variations exist, enough consistent data is available to draw some general conclusions about.

> . . student performance in districts on the four day school week. . . As reported in the individual district profiles. . . it was found, in general, that student test scores did not decline and in some cases increased slightly when a four-day week was implemented.
>
> Based on a review of the available evidence, students who attend New Mexico schools four days a week appear to perform at least as well as their counterparts on a five-day schedule. Further, there is no reason to believe that student achievement or the quality of education is hindered when school districts switch to a four-day schedule.

Another form of assessment described in reports is the judgment of teachers concerning whether they have covered a similar amount of material in the new year, and whether students have "learned as much." Such reports usually tend to be highly subjective and therefore be of questionable importance in any formal evaluation.

Generally, student achievement is assessed in four day districts using norm referenced instruments. Regretably, a great deal of importance cannot be assigned to that data in some districts, given the fact that longitudinal studies are not available. Further complicating the issue is the tendency to switch instruments before any patterns can be traced. While correction factors can permit comparisons to be made between different instruments, the process is fairly time consuming. Thus the most important objective of a school system--improving student performance--is often inadequately addressed in an evaluation of the four day week. The words of a Nebraska study committee concerning this shortage of persuasive data seem an appropriate conclusion to this chapter:

> A reliable assessment is not available on the impact that alternative school schedules are or will have on student learning. Some information has been made available as to cost savings and the potential impact that alternative school schedules have on improving 'Time on Task' or time management. However, alternative school schedules are still in their infancy and the children of Nebraska should not be subjected to yet another educational experiment that may prove to be less effective than what is now in use. For these reasons, it is suggested by the Study Committee that a monitoring and evaluation mechanism be

established if Nebraska schools are allowed to experiment with alternative school schedules.

Financial Considerations

THE FINANCIAL CLIMATE

ADVANTAGES OF THE FOUR DAY WEEK

HOW THE FOUR DAY WEEK SAVES

CAUTION!

Most four day school districts enter into the alternative calendar for financial reasons. Costs have risen steadily in the last decade, usually without a paralleled increase in educational revenues. School boards are therefore forced to examine ways of reducing spending while attempting to leave instructional programs and services intact. The four day week, according to the claims of a number of implementing districts, has helped meet that objective by reducing some operating costs.

Financial problems in many Oregon districts are very real. In their 1982 budgeting process, Days Creek and Prospect, Oregon, exemplified other small districts:

> We realized right away we were going to face some revenue shortfalls and some real budgetary problems. We were looking at the probability of cutting our athletic program completely out, our lunch program, further reducing staff which in the year previous had been already greatly reduced. . . We didn't want to make those drastic cuts, and so at that point we really started giving the four day week a good look. (Roger Rada, Days Creek Superintendent, in FOUR DAYS A WEEK, a videotape produced by Jackson Education Service District).

Such problems continued. In September of 1983, barely into the new school year, 56 Oregon districts with 38% of all

public school students faced drastically changed programs or school closures unless votes for operating levies were favorable. By this time Rogue River, Oregon, had adopted a four day schedule for financial reasons after exploring several alternatives:

> During the past four years . . . Rogue River has faced continually shrinking revenues. This condition has resulted from decreased federal and state support and budget committee reductions in proposed local levies. Faced with very measurable losses in available funds, the Board of Directors has attempted to maintain educational program quality while reducing expenditures.
>
> To accomplish this difficult task, the Board has utilized a number of cost saving procedures. Certified staff has been reduced by approximately 20%; classified staff has been reduced numerically and remaining staff has been uniformly reduced in working hours; administrative staff has been reduced by 20%; food services have been completely removed from budget support; energy savings procedures have been identified and implemented.
>
> With continuing need to further cut costs, the Board is determined to identify and research more innovative cost savings procedures. One such procedure identified for evaluation is the four-day school week successfully utilized by several school districts nationwide to reduce costs.

The problem continues into 1984, with many districts anticipating the difficult task of asking voters to approve increased operating levies or new tax bases. The financial problems of Oregon school districts are not unique; similar problems are evidenced in other states as well.

In such a climate, plans to save money are reasonably sure to appeal to boards and patrons. The four day week offers districts which are facing extreme financial hardships an opportunity to cut some costs in order to save programs or keep schools open. For districts less hard pressed, reallocation of funds may be an objective. Cutting student transportation costs, for example, might result in more dollars for instructional materials and supplies.

In a request to adopt a four day calendar, the superintendent of a small district in Arizona speaks of problems common to many other rural districts. "We put about

650 miles a day on our buses, about 70% of it on dirt roads." A newspaper article (REPUBLIC, October 1983) indicates that the district's enrollment has dropped steadily over the past few years with a resulting drop in state funds. Combined with a decrease in the equalization formula, loss of $20,000 vocational education monies, and high transportation costs, district leaders experienced significant financial pressures which they felt might be alleviated under the four day plan.

An objective of improvement of instruction is evidenced in an appeal to the 1983 North Dakota Legislative Assembly. Enactment of Senate Bill 2386 resulted, permitting four day instructional weeks to be approved under certain conditions. Testimony included statements about the difficulty small school districts have in finding time and money for instructional improvement activities. By cutting a day of transportation, it was estimated that $10,000 would be available for staff inservice and curriculum development.

> Small rural schools do not have the numbers or the resources to go it alone in school improvement. We will talk about the numbers now and say more about the resources a bit later. Teaching in a small school, being an administrator in a small school is a lonely business. As the only second grade teacher or the only science teacher, you have no one with which to exchange ideas or discuss problems. It is very easy to get in a rut when it comes to classroom practice. A school improvement effort which involves two or more. . . breaks down this isolation and provides a chance to discuss instructional issues with others in similar situations. . . If one is concerned about rural school improvement, the question to be asked is "should we continue to spend $10,000 + or - bussing students to school five days rather than four, or should we reinvest that money to improve the instructional programs which students interact with the four days that they are in school?"

As a change to the four day week is anticipated, some individuals may incorrectly estimate that the new calendar will result in a 20% savings to the district. Realistically, since not all line items will be affected by the change, actual savings will be far less. The following analysis of budget items indicates some areas in which savings may be expected to occur, and points out other areas which will remain virtually unaffected:

SALARIES:

Most employees will work about the same number of hours, since four school days per week are lengthened to accommodate the hours taken from the fifth day. Usually, certificated staff members are required to work more hours each day but fewer days during the period of the contract so their pay remains the same. However, the hours of classified employees in such areas as student transportation, food services, maintenance, are sometimes reduced. Overall savings in salaries of regular staff will probably not be significant. Amounts paid to substitute teachers may be reduced significantly if staff absences decrease significantly because of the four day week. A savings in substitute salaries is difficult for a district to project in its first year of the alternative calendar. Information from Colorado, now with thirty districts on the four day week, indicates an average of 24.5 fewer substitutes per district per year.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

If salaries remain virtually unchanged, fringe benefits tied to salary figures (retirement, unemployment insurance, etc.) will be unaffected. A decrease in fringe benefits will occur only if the number of employees is reduced or if insurance rates is lowered.

CONTRACTED/CONSULTATION SERVICES:

If consultant services have been needed prior to implementation of the four day week, it is unlikely that the need for such services will disappear simply because of the calendar change. Consequently, savings in this area may be negligible.

INSERVICE:

Staff members will continue to need inservice training. In fact, major innovations like a change in the school calendar usually call for staff inservice sessions to increase in intensity and frequency. In Wyoming, where the four day week was planned not primarily as a financial measure but to augment professional and curriculum development activities, "the startup costs associated with the new approach were likely

off-set by savings in general operating costs."

STAFF TRAVEL:

Savings can occur in this area, particularly if the district has itinerant teachers or specialists. Creative planning must be employed in order for total mileage to be reduced without cutting back on necessary services.

RENTALS:

These costs are usually determined on the basis of per item rented, not per time in use; therefore, savings will probably not occur for this budget item.

UTILITIES:

Some savings can be realized, since usage can be held to a minimum during non-school hours. However, protective lighting and heating will still be necessary. Research conducted to determine the most energy-efficient school calendar yields information that fifty degrees Fahrenheit is the lowest safe temperature for a building not in use. The cost to reheat a building from any lower temperature, whether after a weekend or longer period, is greater than the cost to maintain it at fifty degrees. If the off day is utilized for special activities, necessitating heat or air conditioning and lights, savings will be minimal. Colorado's evaluation report indicates a reduction of 23% in electrical consumption and from 7% - 25% in heating fuel costs. A recent evaluation report of New Mexico's four day districts lists a 10% - 25% reduction in energy consumption. Because utility rates are increasing in most parts of the nation, consumption must be reduced substantially in order to result in lower expenditures. An individual district's circumstances must be taken into consideration in order to make realistic predictions.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION:

Operating buses for four instead of five days should save dollars. However, the savings will probably not be as great as 20%, primarily because not all costs associated with busing are reduced

in direct proportion to the reduction in days. Gasoline consumption for buses and other school vehicles in Colorado's four day districts has been reduced by percentages up to 22.5%, bus maintenance, 18%. New Mexico's districts have realized a 10% - 20% savings in transportation costs.

FOOD SERVICE:

Some costs in this area can be reduced by a move to the four day week. The amount of savings will depend largely on the district's particular system of handling food services. New Mexico reports 10% or less.

INSURANCE:

A reduction in insurance premiums for buses may be possible, since reduced use translates into reduced liability. On the other hand, reduced use of buildings could produce the opposite effect, because insurance companies consider empty buildings a greater risk than occupied buildings. A district's insurance company should definitely be consulted when implementation of a four day week is being considered.

SUPPLIES:

The need for classroom supplies will remain essentially unchanged, as the number of instructional hours is usually not reduced, only the number of days. Reduced need for other types of supplies--building maintenance, for example--may translate into savings.

Another very important consideration could be easily overlooked. As costs are reduced, resources may also be reduced as a direct result.

BASIC SCHOOL SUPPORT:

Basic School Support Fund (BSSF) in Oregon is paid to a district based upon several areas: basic grant, small schools adjustment, transportation needs, and equalization. The four day week can affect some of these areas and therefore affect the BSSF payment. For example, the basic grant is computed based on the district's average cost per student for specified items in a district's

budget. A district is reimbursed up to a certain limit for its costs on those items. If those costs are reduced below the limit, a district will suffer a reduction in the basic grant funds and, possibly, in equalization. Additionally, pupil transportation costs are reimbursed approximately 50% through BSSF. If transportation costs are reduced, an Oregon district will have a reduction in the amount of BSSF it receives. For states whose funding formulae are similar, this is an important issue to consider prior to implementation of the four day week.

North Carolina, in Senate Bill 2386, assures no loss of state funds because of the change: "Upon approval by the superintendent of a pilot program for a school district, the district is eligible to receive full state educational aid."

TAX LIMITATION CONSIDERATION:

Senate Bill 792, 1983 Oregon Legislature, created a limitation on the tax rate that can be used to fund district operations. This Bill became law on January 1, 1984, and is found in ORS 310.575. Part of this limitation allows for additional levy authority in case of "Loss of Revenues." Under ORS 310.575 (4) (b), these revenue losses cannot be the result of an action of the school district.

A methodical, meticulous study of budget line items is necessary by any district considering a change to a four day week. Operating costs exclusive of salaries are generally about 20% or less of the total budget. Salaries and related costs constitute approximately 80% or more. If salaries remain basically unchanged, savings will be minimal. Even if a district could realize a maximum 20% reduction in all operating costs except salaries, 20% of 20% will result in only about a 4% reduction in total expenditures. Four day week districts are reporting an average of only 1% to 3% per year savings in the total expenditures of the district. For a district threatened with significant program cuts or possible school closure, that amount may be enough justification to merit a change to a four day week. However, as illustrated previously, a reduction in spending one year could precipitate further cuts the following year because of reduced revenues. Consequently, a district might discover that instead of solving financial problems, the four day week has merely postponed the most pressing ones.

Pros & Cons

From reviewing district and state documents about the four day week, the authors can make several predictions:

Operating a school district on a four day week will save some money. (However, the amount saved will probably not exceed 5% of the total budget. Actual percentages are ranging from 1% to 4%).

Planning, conversion, and actual implementation will consume many, many man hours and will involve many individuals.

The four day week will probably promote an awareness in staff of how they use instructional time. (The change in schedule will not, by itself, cause any change in QUALITY of instruction, and such awareness can be encouraged by other methods).

The change will probably cause district staff to look closely at test scores--what they reveal and what they DON'T reveal.

The conversion process, if handled well by district boards and administration, can unify a small rural district. (District staffs, students, and patrons are drawn together in a common cause. Any major innovation could have the same effect).

The change will bring attention to the district. Four day districts report a "showcase" effect that may bring about a feeling of importance and improved morale.

The four day week will probably receive positive ratings from students, staffs, and a fairly high percentage of parents. (Students' and staffs'

favorable ratings may be based on personal, not educational, reasons).

The alternative calendar probably will not "injure" students in the sense that their learning will be impaired. (However, this most important issue needs further examination. Most four day districts do not have data from past years with which to compare).

A large urban district could anticipate problems simply because of student numbers.

While this topic does not seem to be a problem yet in four day districts, communities may begin to question non-utilization or under-utilization of expensive school facilities during the off day. If facilities are then brought back to full utilization for school or community activities, costs will increase.

A district with significant problems (poorly-prepared staff, negotiations difficulties, school-community discord, inadequate facilities, etc.) should not attempt any major innovation such as the four day week. Existing problems will probably only become worse. The time and energy necessary to make the calendar change should be used, instead, to resolve conflicts and solve problems.

Survey Results

The research project which resulted in this booklet was completed by Jackson Education Service District, funded by Southern Oregon Research and Development Committee and Oregon Department of Education. Russ Gillian, Southern Oregon State College student, and Jean Pope, Director of Curriculum and Special Projects, Jackson ESD, collaborated in the research and writing.

As one part of the research procedure, brief surveys were sent to all states and U. S. possessions. In following up survey responses, four day district documents were obtained which provided details about implementation benefits and problems. Additionally, searches for periodical articles and other documents dealing with this particular alternative calendar were completed.

The following pages incorporate information gained from the survey to states, responses being grouped in several categories:

States which have not implemented four day instructional weeks

States which have not yet implemented but have completed studies and/or may intend to implement at a later date

States which have implemented four day instructional weeks

STATES WITH/WITHOUT FOUR DAY DISTRICTS AS OF 1983-1984

State	Current	Past Ten Years
Alabama	No	No
Alaska	No	No
Arizona	Yes	
Arkansas	No	No
California	Yes	
Colorado	Yes	
Connecticut	No	No
Delaware	No	No
Florida	No	No
Georgia	No	No
Hawaii	No	No
Idaho	No	No
Illinois	No	No
Indiana	No	No
Iowa	Yes	
Kansas	Yes	
Kentucky	No	No
Louisiana	No	No
Maryland	No	No
Maine	No	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	
Michigan	No	No
Minnesota	Yes	
Mississippi	No	No
Missouri	No	No
Montana	No	No
Nebraska	No	No
Nevada	No	No
New Hampshire	Yes	
New Jersey	Yes	
New Mexico	Yes	
New York	No	No
North Carolina	No	No
North Dakota	No	No
Ohio	No	No
Oklahoma	No	No
Oregon	Yes	
Pennsylvania	No	No
Rhode Island	No	No
South Carolina	No	No
South Dakota	No	No
Tennessee	No	No
Texas	No	
Utah	No	Yes
Vermont	No	No
Virginia	No	No
Washington	No	No
West Virginia	No	
Wisconsin	No	
Wyoming	No	Yes

U. S. POSSESSIONS WITH/WITHOUT FOUR DAY DISTRICTS AS OF 1983-1984

Possession	Current	Past Ten Years
Guam	No	No
Marianas	No	No
Puerto Rico	No	No
Virgin Islands	No	No

States which have not implemented four day instructional weeks

Questions asked:

Have any studies of the four day instructional week been conducted in your state, either by individual districts or your State Department of Education?

> If a state is listed, a survey response was received; if no information is provided by the state name, no study had been completed and no comments were made by the respondent.

Have any four day instructional week programs been implemented in your state: (A) During the current (83-84) school year, or (B) Within the past ten school years?

> All the states listed below responded "no" to both parts of this question:

Alabama

Alaska

Arkansas

Connecticut

> "Connecticut law requires a school year of 180 days, with 900 hours of instructional time. Any deviation from this may take place only with the prior approval of the State Board of Education. Currently engaged in discussion of a longer school year and day, the Board would likely not consider a reduction."

Delaware

Florida

> "We don't have any four day week schools. A 180 day calendar is mandated by law."

Georgia

Hawaii

Idaho

Illinois

Indiana

A law has just been passed mandating a minimum of six hours instructional time (excluding lunch breaks, passing time, etc.) per day. A waiver could possibly be granted if instructional days were lengthened beyond that time, but probably not anytime in the near future.

Kentucky

"Has been discussed."

Louisiana

Maryland

Michigan

Mississippi

Missouri

"We haven't experimented with the four-day week in the state of Missouri as yet. However, I would be interested in the results of your survey if that is possible."

Montana

"In the past (1983) legislative session there was a proposed bill to allow for a 4-day school week. . . it was defeated! No further plans to proceed on this! (The Bill was proposed by a teacher-legislator--no office position!)"

Nevada

North Carolina

"Although North Carolina does not have any four-day instructional week programs in its public schools, two school systems are testing an extended school day and year over a three-year period, beginning with the 83-84 school year. The additional time consists of a seven-hour school day and a 200-day school calendar for students. I am enclosing a report on the extended time project to date. The department is in the process of developing a handbook on methods by which any school system could improve learning through effective use of extended time. Our department is looking at various approaches to extended instructional time and would be very interested in your booklet describing the successes and problems of a four-day instructional week program. . . Information on extended school time is scarce and your project will be helpful to all of us. . . " Additional information was included.

Ohio

Oklahoma

South Carolina

South Dakota

Tennessee

Vermont

Virginia

Washington

West Virginia

State law requires 180 days of instruction, and no provision is made for adjustment of length of day to compensate for four day schedules.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin State Department of Education does not support the concept, as 180 days are mandated. No four day programs have been implemented. Two districts expressed an interest in the past, but no action was taken to allow them to proceed. There was some feeling against the concept in a MILWAUKIE JOURNAL editorial.

Guam

"While Guam ha never had a four day instructional week, it did, through scheduling teacher preparation periods at the beginning of the school day and dropping one class period in each student's courses, reduce the number of teachers needed by 16%, i.e., each student instead of meeting all classes every day only met each class four times a week with the exception of first period which is also homeroom. This, in effect, was like a four day instructional week. This pattern of scheduling also enabled the Department to meet certain restrictive provisions of our Board of Education/AFT Union contract. No formal study of the impact has been undertaken; however this pattern of schooling apparently has had no real impact on student test scores on national standardized tests (Stanford Achievement, Advanced, and TASK and SRA tests). This pattern of scheduling will be replaced next school year (84-85) and we will need an additional 16% more teachers (91 total) in our high schools as the more traditional staggered preparation periods will be re-instituted."

Puerto Rico

"At present, we are working toward an extended school day, in order to better meet the needs of our student population. However, the results of your research regarding a 4-day instructional week would greatly interest us."

Saipan, Commonwealth, Marianas

Virgin Islands

States which have completed studies, but have not implemented four day instructional weeks

Nebraska

A copy of the study, completed by a seven member committee was enclosed with the survey response. Refer to annotated bibliography.

New York

"Some years ago, this Department had representatives of various educational groups consider variations of our regular school calendar. One of these variations was the four-day school week. It seemed to offer three advantages: 1) three-day weekends; 2) energy conservation; and 3) reduced transportation needs. There appeared to be problems, as well: 1) overlong instructional days; 2) overlong weekends, leading to problems at home and around the community; 3) difficulties in scheduling sports events; and 4) unfavorable union responses. Our Board of Regents is now considering extending both the school day and the school year. It seems unlikely that a four-day school week will be instituted here in New York State in the near future."

North Dakota

This state has not yet implemented a four day plan, but a Senate Bill has been enacted to enable a district to modify its calendar to less than 180 days. Materials explaining the Bill accompanied the survey response.

Pennsylvania

"In 1981 and 1982 the concept of a four day school week was given considerable attention by many school districts. In response to requests from districts, the Department of Education developed the enclosed guidelines. In response it appeared that the idea lost its appeal in the state since the Department did not receive any approvable requests. At this time in Pennsylvania the curriculum is being revised, which will require an increase in class time that could not be met in a four day week. I believe that the possibility of any district considering a four day week is remote. The Pennsburg School district in Fallsington, Pa., did an extensive feasibility study of their district regarding a four day week which I'm sure they would share with you." Material was enclosed with survey: Preliminary Feasibility Study Meritorious Educational Program, Four-Day School Week.

Rhode Island

"A proposal for a four day school week was studied in 1982 in the Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District. . . There are no districts in Rhode Island on a non-traditional calendar such as a four day school week. The four day week concept would require special legislation because state law requires that schools be in session for at least one hundred eighty days."

Texas

The state department conducted an implementation study, but the respondent did not feel any four day plans will be started. Texas is looking at an extended day, extended year based on demonstrated needs of students. A pilot project--five days, year-around--school is now in operation.

States which have completed studies and have implemented four day instructional weeks

Questions asked: If any four day instructional week programs have been implemented in your state, are they current? Have they been implemented within the past ten years? What have been the primary reasons? Is a program viewed as: (A) A temporary or pilot program (B) A potentially viable long-range option?

Arizona

The respondent indicated a study had been completed and four day programs have been implemented in the current year. Reason: financial. The plan is viewed as both a temporary or pilot program and a potentially viable long-range option.

California

Two "VERY small" districts are operating on a four day schedule this year. Three were approved as pilots, but only two actually started the plan. The requests were based on energy problems and financial difficulties. A new Senate Bill #813 offers incentive money to districts which will implement longer days, longer years, so it seems unlikely that additional districts will receive approval to schedule a four day instructional program.

Colorado

Colorado is one of the states which has a "history" of four day districts spanning several years and has developed evaluative reports which support the calendar. Reasons listed for implementing the four day week: financial, instructional improvement, and other. The state views the four day instructional week as both a pilot and as a potentially viable long-range option: "after pilot of three years the school becomes permanently established in the alternative schedule and no longer submits evaluation data."

Iowa

This state has implemented within the past ten years, and is currently operating programs. Reasons: financial and to conserve energy. The calendar is viewed as a temporary or pilot program. A copy of the Legislative Bill allowing the four day week was received with the survey response.

Kansas

Two responses were received by Kansas districts, one from the Department of Education, and another from the

Kansas Association of School Boards. Districts moved to a four day week for financial reasons, to save energy, and to improve attitudes of staff and students toward school. "This is the fourth year that we (Unified School District #258, Humboldt) have had an academic calendar containing 1080 hours, rather than 180 days. During the month of February (which we normally assume to be the coldest month) we have school Tuesday-Friday each week. This enables us to save on utilities by waiting until Monday p. m. to warm the buildings. (We don't completely cut the heat off at any time, but lower it considerably while the students are not there), and also enables us to save a great deal by not operating the buses those days. Our custodians work on those days and are sometimes able to do a more thorough job of cleaning while the buildings are not occupied. As yet, we have not changed the bus drivers' salaries because of the shorter work time, but we can see how this, too, could result in savings to a district. We cannot give you figures that would mean very much concerning the savings in utilities because as our usage decreased the rates nearly doubled. . . we can only say that the cost would have been much more if we had school on those days. We added only a few minutes each day to our schedule over the school year to make up for the time lost. . . it is hardly noticeable by the students or the teachers. There is a possibility that we may have saved some 'personal business' leave costs for teachers, giving them a weekday in which to conduct their business that cannot be done on weekends. At least, this is one reason that the teachers seem to like the arrangement very much. Another is that students' appointments with the dentist, orthodontist, hairdresser, etc., can be taken care of on those days, and this may save some absences. I can see how other savings could be effected if your classified personnel is paid on an hourly basis. . . as bus drivers', custodians', patrolmen's, and food service employees' salaries could decrease your total payroll. Our classified employees are paid on a monthly basis and we do not realize any savings from these days. . . . Should have mentioned the complaints. Some parents complain that they need a babysitter an extra day because their children are out of school an extra day. However, this resulted in extra spending money for high school students and for full-time mothers who one day each week care for a working mother's children."

Maine

The state implemented a four day plan within the past

ten years, but no districts are on the alternative schedule during the current school year. Reason for implementation: instructional improvement, and the program was seen as a temporary or pilot program. Additional materials were sent with the survey response.

Massachusetts

Two districts have implemented four day weeks: "As the response indicates, the two programs that have been tried, as well as the several inquiries we receive annually, are essentialy motivated, as apparently your study is, by fiscal concerns. I believe it is fair to say that the movement does not elicit strong response here, particularly when money is the prime factor, simply because we hold time on task and frequency of contact between teachers and students to be so vital to learning. We would certainly like to share the results of your study." The survey response indicates that implementation occurred within the past ten school years, but not during 83-84. Reasons: financial, space restrictions, energy conservation. Viewed as both a temporary or pilot program and a potentially viable long-range option in the Blackstone Valley District, the four day week is explained by the superintendent:

"The Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional High School instituted a 4-day (January, February, March) in 1981 as a cost-saving effort--reduction of energy use: fuel oil and electrical power. The decision was based on 'attacking' the problem at the cause--the cold winter season. The fall and spring seasons do not cause excessive use of fuel or electric energy--both seasons are relatively mild and have ample natural sunlight.

The Four-Day Plan involves the following school year adjustments:

Opening of school on or about August 20 rather than after Labor Day--gain 7 to 8 school days.

Conduct 4-day sessions during months of January, February, and March by shutting down classrooms all day Friday. This allows 'night cycle' settings on heating controls for three successive days (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Fridays are declared 'Energy Saving Days.' Occasionally (Martin Luther King Day and Washington's Birthday) legal holidays are celebrated on Mondays and school is closed four successive days.

We conduct no evening activities during January, February, and March. The school is closed at 3:00 p. m.

Results of the Four-Day Plan are all positive:

Staff morale is better--absenteeism is reduced.

Facilities are better maintained--custodians work on

Friday.
Student performance is excellent--less absenteeism.
Energy costs have stabilized and have been reduced.
No school days are lost (180 days at 5.5 hrs/day)."

Minnesota

Currently there are eight four day districts. While first viewed as a temporary or pilot program, some four day districts think it is a potentially viable long range option now. Reason for implementation: financial.

New Hampshire

The state has completed studies of the plan and one four day district, as well as the Department of Education, responded. Reasons for implementation: financial and to improve instruction. The plan is viewed as a temporary or pilot program.

New Jersey

The response indicates that four day programs have been implemented during the current school year as a seasonal schedule. The reasons: financial and for fuel conservation. The program is viewed as both a temporary or pilot program and a potentially long range option/

New Mexico

New Mexico, like Colorado, is a district with a "history" to share concerning four day districts. "Thank you for your interest in the 4-Day School Week in New Mexico. Ten (of 88) N. M. school districts are currently operating on 4-Day School Week schedules." The plan was implemented for financial reasons and to reduce energy consumption; it is perceived in New Mexico as a potentially viable long-range option for small school districts. A recently published evaluation report lists specific results for each implementing district.

Oregon

Prospect (Jackson County) and Days Creek (Douglas County) are in their second year of the four day plan. Rogue River (Jackson County) and Union (Union County) are in their first year of implementation. These four projects have been approved as pilots by the Oregon Department of Education. A letter from Loy Barbour, Specialist, School District Administration, Oregon Department of Education, suggests that "research has not shown that the length of the school year, or any other factor, enhances the quality of instruction found

in a classroom. Research and unsubstantiated opinions both say that, given good instruction, the more time students have 'on task' with teacher interaction, the higher the level of learning. Dr. Duncan's (Dr. Verne Duncan, State Superintendent of Instruction) position on the '4-Day Week' concept is that it be used only in extreme situations where a school district faces excessive financial obstacles. He also insists that the instructional time for students in a '4-Day' schedule be no less than in a traditional '5-Day' schedule." Reason for all districts: financial. The projects are viewed, according to the survey, as pilot programs and as potentially viable long-range options. A March 1, 1984, memo to Chief School and College Executives from Dr. Duncan indicates "For the 1984-85 school year, new requests for waiving state standards for alternative schedules, including the four-day week, will be approved only when necessary to keep schools open during a fiscal crisis. Approval will be granted on a year-to-year basis to districts which have demonstrated the effort to maintain public support of current programs. Approval will be granted only to schools which meet the Oregon Department of Educaton criteria."

Utah

Utah has had four day districts within the past ten years, but has none currently. The reason for implementation was financial; the program was viewed as a potentially viable long-range option.

Wyoming

The Sheridan County project involved several small school districts in a four day plan during 82-83. The project was implemented for financial and instructional improvement reasons, and to avoid student absenteeism due to extra-curricular activities. The Wyoming Supreme Court ruled the four day plan unconstitutional, however, and the project was discontinued in April before completion of one school year. Wyoming Department of Education indicates that "We are not submitting legislation." A very thorough evaluation of the project was completed by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, Oregon.

Annotated Bibliography

State and District Documents

If no author's name is evident, the district superintendent's name has been listed as author.

Efforts have been made to secure all documents published by districts which have studied or implemented four day programs. This list includes materials received prior to publication date. Additional documentation is invited and will be listed in reprints of this booklet.

ARIZONA

Landavazo, Joseph, APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE PATAGONIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 20-21 TO IMPLEMENT A FOUR DAY WEEK. Patagonia, AZ: Patagonia High School, 1983.

> A collection of materials submitted to the State Board of Education requesting permission to implement a four day week for financial reasons. Interesting history via letters and newspaper clippings. (20 pages)

COLORADO

Brubacher, Roy G., and Stiverson, C. L., COLORADO'S ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR PROGRAM AND THE FOUR DAY WEEK. Denver, CO: Colorado State Department of Education, January 1982.

> An update of Colorado four day districts, more recent evaluation results. (7 pages)

Richburg, Robert W., and Wood, Lonnie, AN ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK. Fort Collins, CO: Office for Rural Education, Colorado State University, 1983.

> As indicated in the title, some helpful suggestions for implementing the four day week successfully from a state frequently cited as one having the most practical information to share. Includes an introduction and an overview of the implementation process which reviews Colorado's experiences. Provides suggestions and checklists for the following kinds of necessary decisions: initial decisions, scheduling, curriculum, staffing and personnel, co-curricular, final

decisions, and evaluation. Types of evaluation instruments, and an appendix listing Colorado four day districts. Extremely valuable publication for a district anticipating implementation, and useful for districts already on a four day plan. (84 pages)

Richburg, Robert W., and Edelen, Robert W., AN EVALUATION OF THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK IN COLORADO: THE FINAL REPORT. Fort Collins, CO: Office for Rural Education, Colorado State University, 1981.

One of the widely read and quoted sources of information about four day districts which have several years of experience in the alternative calendar. A thorough study of what has occurred in these districts: achievement, attendance, and financial impact. A section is included listing recommendations for further study. Appendices offer sample survey forms. (78 pages) An update (February 7, 1983) outlines progress since the evaluation report was published. (78 pages)

KANSAS

Fraley, James W., ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR, Unified School District No. 251, North Lyon County, Kansas. No publication date.

A review of the history of the four day week's implementation in the United States, a summary of opinions from districts involved, potential benefits and problems, list of required minimum days of states. (18 pages)

Fraley, James W., PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE CALENDAR FOR 1983 - 84 SCHOOL YEAR, Unified School District No. 251, North Lyon County, Kansas. No publication date.

An evaluative report of four schools participating in a four day week study, including results of surveys sent to parents, students, and teachers. Also included: school calendar examples, statements regarding the "economics" of the plan, and five recommendations for the future. (83 pages)

MAINE

Brewster, Albert J., LESS SCHOOL - BETTER LEARNING: THE FOUR DAY WEEK. Unity, ME: Main School Administrative

District No. 3, 1972.

A presentation to the General Subcommittee on Education, Committee on Education and Labor, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, April 24, 1972. An early look at the four day instructional week--its potential as viewed by a superintendent. (4 pages)

Maxcy, Horace P., "A Summary Report: The Four-Day School Week Evaluation," MEMORANDUM. Augusta, ME: Maine State Department of Education.

A one page memorandum summarizes evaluation data from SAD 3, comprised of eleven small communities in Waldo County. The program was supported by over $100,000 in federal funds for Friday programs for teachers. An accompanying news article (BANGOR DAILY NEWS, Tuesday, August 28, 1979) indicates that "the four-day week was phased out in 1976 for several reasons. . . First of all, the federal grant which was used to hire a program coordinator ran out. Enthusiasm among staff members was also beginning to wane as they ran out of ideas for Friday training sessions." Feelings of a district superintendent interviewed for the article were that "the approach won't save much energy and it may hurt education." His opinion was that "Students will either waste energy at home or driving cars, or they will be out getting into mischief such as vandalizing schools and causing even greater costs." Other superintendents refuted those claims, saying the arrangement "won't hurt education." Maxcy reports in his evaluation that parents, students and faculty expressed satisfaction with the schools in SAD 3, and that teachers felt the plan helped them become more effective. However, "Concern continues to be expressed about the cost of operating the schools and the tax burden placed on the citizens."

MINNESOTA

Gushwa, Prudence, A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF THREE DIVERSE MINNESOTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH USED THE FOUR DAY WEEK CALENDAR DURING THE 1981-1982 SCHOOL YEAR. Rochester, MN. (Doctoral thesis to be completed in 1984)

This study will focus on three districts with different characteristics inclusive of expenditure

and demographic factors. The researcher/author will address: Measured effects of the calendar on parents, students, and teachers; attendance figures for students and teachers; organizational adjustments; and expenditure changes. Each of the three districts has fewer than 500 students. Ms. Gushwa is an administrator for Rochester Public School District. Phone (507) 285-8824.

NEBRASKA

Bergman, Dean, Crosier, Robert, and The Study Committee for Alternative School Time Schedules, A STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL TIME SCHEDULES FOR NEBRASKA SCHOOLS. Nebraska: Nebraska State Department of Education, 1982.

A well organized document developed by a committee of eight people in response to a resolution by the State Board. The committee's purpose was to research ways and means to relieve the pressures stimulated by educational costs, especially those associated with fuel or energy, and to find ways to address increasing demands on facilities and instructional time. A review of literature is included, as well as summaries of several options, including the four day week. Appendices include Nebraska and Colorado statutes dealing with instructional time. (59 pages)

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Arzigian, Diane, et al, THE FINAL REPORT OF THE FOUR-DAY WEEK. Deerfield, N. H.: Deerfield School District, 1983.

A committee report of a New Hampshire school district. Included are chapters covering these topics: student achievement; staff; parents; students; community; art, music and physical education programs; teacher/student attendance; energy analysis; comparative financial reports. Comments by the superintendent illustrate his conviction that the program is very effective for the district. Other authors: Mary Benton, George Blaisdell, John Dickson, Richard Kerper, Hal Stevens, Peter Sweet, and Paul Yergeau. (75 pages)

NEW MEXICO

McCoy, Jack, A SUMMARY REPORT ON THE FOUR-DAY WEEK IN NEW MEXICO. Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico State Department of

Education, 1983.

A thorough study of ten districts currently operating on a four day week schedule. An interesting legal history of New Mexico's experience related to the four day week is included, as well as references to the Colorado study. Specific statements about each district are made: what savings have occurred, what changes have been necessitated in instructional and staffing schedules, and what gains have been realized in student achievement. A section on "Other Issues" includes evidence and speculation on the potential range of outcomes that may occur when the four day week is implemented. (41 pages)

Pompeo, Joe, THE 4-DAY WEEK. Cimarron, NM: Cimarron School District.

A much-quoted authority on the four day week describes how to get the new calendar moving.

NEW YORK

Educational Facilities Labs., Inc., SCHOOL CALENDARS AND ENERGY USE. Technical Report No. 3. Albany, N. Y.: New York State Education Department, May 1978.

A study of the energy implications of nine school calendars in "typical" New York State elementary schools. 54 pages.

NORTH CAROLINA

Halifax County Schools, TIME FOR LEARNING. Halifax, NC: 1983.

An interesting history of how two districts received permission to operate an EXTENDED school year--200 days, seven hours per day. In view of the wave of national interest in a longer school year, it is not surprising that the North Carolina State Department of Education receives "Inquiries. . . from literally all over the nation--from newspapers, wire services, radio and television stations and from state and local education officials." Interest has been so great, in fact, that visitations are coordinated through the Department of Education. (17 pages)

NORTH DAKOTA

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Bismarck, ND, TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE 1983 NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DURING THE HEARING PROCESS ON SB 2386, ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR. Bismarck, ND: 1983.

An argument presented to the Legislative Assembly for the four day week. Colorado information provides part of the justification in the document. An interesting view of the process of changing legislation to accommodate an alternative calendar. (14 pages)

OHIO

Roeth, James, Doctoral Thesis on Implementation of the Four Day Week (not complete as of April, 1984). Union City, OH.

A study to be completed during the 84-85 school year by James Roeth, Superintendent of Union City School District. His review of the alternative calendar has the endorsement of the State Superintendent of Instruction. However, that endorsement, according to Mr. Roeth, does not indicate the State Superintendent's approval of the concept. The document will deal with implementation efforts and will examine how the "off" day is used for co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. Mr. Roeth has identified 62 four day school districts in the nation and is currently receiving information from them.

OREGON

Eagle Point 4-Day Week Study Committee, 4-DAY SCHOOL WEEK COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Eagle Point, OR: April 12, 1984.

Two recommendations from a study committee to the Eagle Point School Board. In summary, the committee did not believe sufficient data existed to support long term educational implications, therefore did not recommend implementation. Additionally, the committee felt that financial savings would be such a small percentage of the total budget (2.9%) that the four day week "would be a viable option only in the event of a severe financial crisis." Committee research involved information from four day districts in Oregon and in other states. Jackson ESD research materials

were utilized. (25 pages)

Gail, R. Terry, EVALUATION REPORT OF THE 4-DAY ALTERNATE CALENDAR IN PROSPECT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 59: A FIRST YEAR PILOT PROGRAM. Prospect, OR: 1983.

A review of evaluation process and results after the implementation year (1982-83). Includes various kinds of documentation: survey responses of students, teachers, and parents; test results, financial savings, and suggestions for program revisions for year two. (50 pages)

Gilliland, Travis H., FOUR DAY WEEK REPORT, Rogue River School District No. 35, Rogue River, Oregon. May, 1983.

A document submitted to the Oregon Deartment of Education as justification for entering into a four day week for the 83-84 school year. Included are descriptions of the decision-making process, brief history of four day districts and results of their involvement, review of on-site visits and other research efforts, an outline of five impact areas (financial, instructional, scheduling, family, and transportation), evaluation needs and methods, implementation procedures, and statement of objectives. (23 pages)

Jackson Education Service District, FOUR DAYS A WEEK. Medford, OR: 1983.

A videotape produced by Jackson ESD featuring two Oregon four day district superintendents, Roger Rada, Days Creek, and Terry Gail, Prospect. Moderated by Jean Pope, ESD. Discussion focuses on financial reasons for implementation, processes of involving community, early progress reports, and evaluation plans.

Rada, Roger, EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE CALENDAR PILOT PROJECT: YEAR 1 DAYS CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 15. Days Creek, OR: 1983.

A review of the district's implementation year including test scores, survey results, methods of scheduling, and savings realized.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania Department of Education, PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY - MERITORIOUS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK. Harrisburg, PA: 1982.

A brief explanation of the process any school district should follow "to determine the feasibility and educational implications" of implementing a four day week. The purposes of the district's study would be: "to determine if the proposed program has general acceptability in the school community; to make projections concerning the overall impact of the program; to anticipate problems which might be encountered when the program is put into place; to generate data in support of the district's request for an exception to the 180-day requirement." (6 pages)

WYOMING

Nelson, Steven R., AN EVALUATION OF THE SHERIDAN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL SCHEDULE, Sheridan County School District No. One West, Ranchester, Wyoming, 1982-83. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1983.

A comprehensive evaluation of the Sheridan program which lasted less than one school year because of a State Supreme Court decision regarding minimum length of school year. Detailed descriptions of implementation and evaluation processes, including many tables and charts. Impressive study which is based on a number of evaluation questions related to the innovation. (139 pages)

Periodicals

Articles included in this bibliography have been published within the past few years. Other materials are available dealing with the four day movement in the early 1970s.

AASA, "Energy Savings of Four-Day School Week Questioned in Hearing on DOE Proposal," THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR, 1980, 37:1-2.

Anderson, Lorin, "Policy Implications of Research on School Time," THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR, December 1983, 25-28.

Bauman, Paul, "The Four-Day School Week," ISSUEGRAM, January 1983.

Braun, Dick, "Three-day Weekends for Your Kids," FARM JOURNAL, September 1983, 41-43.

Caldwell, Janet H., Huitt, William G., Graeber, Anna O., "Time Spent in Learning: Implications from Research," THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL, 1982, 82:471-479.

Capital Publications, "Would You Drop Mondays or Fridays?" NATION'S SCHOOLS REPORT, 1982, 8:1-3.

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Southern Oregon Research and Development Committee (SORD) is a program offered by Jackson Education Service District, Medford, OR 97501.

Its members are local district teachers and administrators who meet once monthly to plan activities in four areas: Student Enrichment, Professional Development, Research, and Projects Review (Incentive Grants).

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